

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROJECT
BRIEFING PAPER**

Prepared for the
March 2002 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this presentation is to report the status of the efforts to develop and implement an Environmental Management System (EMS) at WSDOT that meets certification requirements of the International Standard (ISO) 14001 Program.

The purpose of the WSDOT EMS Project is to prepare for the implementation of an EMS that embraces all the Department's program functions. The project includes an effort by Washington State Ferries to bring the existing Safety Management System up to the ISO standard.

ACTION/OUTCOME:

Status Report

BACKGROUND:

WSDOT began its consideration of ISO 14001 in 2001 under the direction of the agency's Compliance Advisory Review Team (CART) co-chaired by Don Nelson and John Conrad. CART directed the Environmental Affairs Office (EAO) to create an EMS Project Management Team to work with a consultant to frame a WSDOT EMS strategy.

Secretary MacDonald set the Department firmly on course to implement an EMS with the establishment of the **WSDOT Environmental Policy Statement**, dated September 26, 2001. Jerry Alb presented EMS information to the Transportation Commission in September 2001.

ISO 14001 Environmental Standards require an organization to structure and implement a compliance system consistent with the five program stages of EMS:

1. General/Environmental Policy = COMPLETE
2. Planning < *Current Stage*
3. Implementation and Operations < *Scheduled to begin January 2003*
4. Checking and Corrective Action
5. Management System Review

CURRENT STAGE

2. PLANNING ELEMENT

Environmental Aspects - Complete by March 30, 2002

Legal and Other Requirements - Estimate Completion by June 2002

Objectives and Targets - Estimate Completion by October 2002

Environmental Management Programs – Complete by December 2002

The planning stage will be complete once the Department has set broad goals and specific targets for the high priority activities, and management programs are in place to support those targets.

Immediate Next Steps

An Aspects Analysis Summary Report is being prepared, due March 15, 2002.

Communication materials are also being developed to gear up for initial meetings with the EMS Working Group as soon as it is established.

EMS Working Group

Completion of the EMS planning steps by the end of 2002 requires commitment of internal staff resources in the form of the EMS Working Group. A memo has been forwarded to Don Nelson on this subject recommending executive sponsorship of an EMS Working Group with members representing a wide cross-section of WSDOT. We intend to blend WSDOT EMS with WSF EMS through the establishment of the EMS Working Group. The EMS Working Group will institutionalize the EMS project.

Funding

EAO has committed funds needed continue project this biennium (\$300,000 for continuing consultant support). EMS Project Team has developed a decision package for the next three biennia (03/05 = \$725,000; 05/07 = \$375,000; and 07/09 = \$300,000).

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission be briefed in July or August on the products of the EMS Working Group. These should include introduction of targets and objectives to address significant environmental aspects.

CONTACT:

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Appendix A

WSDOT EMS PROJECT BENEFITS

The purpose of the WSDOT EMS Project is to prepare for the implementation of an EMS that embraces all the Department's program functions. The project includes an effort by Washington State Ferries to bring the existing Safety Management System up to the ISO standard.

An EMS consistent with ISO 14001 requires that management and staff are committed to the protection of the environment and have clear assignment of accountability and responsibility.

An EMS establishes a disciplined management process for achieving targeted environmental performance levels that include environmental planning in all phases of transportation planning, project development, construction, and maintenance. It requires that appropriate and sufficient resources be provided, including training, to achieve the targeted performance levels.

Lastly, it requires an operational control program to ensure high levels of performance. This includes a continuous evaluation of the program against the policy, objectives, and performance measures; a management review and audit process; and an effective communication plan both internal and external to WSDOT.

Implementation of an environmental management system for all of WSDOT will:

- Clarify environmental expectations, procedures, management, and implementation for all of WSDOT program activities;
- Demonstrate compliance and accountability to the public and regulators alike;
- Provide predictability and certainty to environmental processes by demonstrating an agency commitment to meeting environmental responsibilities – performance driven;
- Identify, manage and reduce risk to the environment of WSDOT based activities;
- Reduce liabilities to WSDOT by establishing business practices, where practicable, that are environmentally sensitive;
- Improve public access to WSDOT's environmental processes, information, permit activities and performance measures.

BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC AGENCIES AND CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

An EMS is a set of management processes and procedures that allow an organization to analyze, control and reduce the environmental impact of its activities, products and services. The net benefits are an overall improvement in environmental performance, improved environmental compliance, reduction in actual/potential environmental impacts and an operation with greater efficiency and control.

ISO 14001¹ is the leading EMS standard throughout the United States and world-wide. Thousands of organizations have implemented and maintained or are in the process of implementing and maintaining an EMS based on the ISO 14001 standard. Most of these organizations are private manufacturing companies; however, many public agencies are realizing benefits of implementing an EMS.

Government organizations are challenged to create structures and processes to address an increasingly diverse range of community needs and environmental expectations. At the same time, the public is questioning the type of services they receive and the efficiency of delivering those services in a manner that addresses their financial, environmental, and social concerns. An EMS creates the structure to integrate an effective workforce to comply with environmental requirements and public expectations.

One key distinction between government organizations implementing an EMS and private companies is the degree of certification. Organizations implementing an EMS may obtain third-party certification/registration to the ISO 14001 standard through a rigorous audit process or they may “self-declare” that they meet the requirements of the standard. Government organizations may also pursue limited certification, this means only specific operations or departments of their organizations are certified to the ISO 14001 standard. This approach has been taken to implement EMS in a progressive manner within the organization.

Examples of government agencies that implementing an EMS:

- New York City Transit Authority
- Massachusetts Port Authority (certified)
- City of Scottsdale, AZ - Departments of Water Resources and Financial Services
- City of Gaithersburg, MD – Department of Public Works
- Regional Municipality of Waterloo, IA – Dept. of Waste Management (certified)
- City of San Diego, CA – Metropolitan Wastewater Department (certified)
- Town of Londonderry, NH – Department of Public Works
- Massachusetts State Department of Corrections
- US Army - Fort Lewis, WA – Public Works Department (certified)
- US Navy - Keyport, WA - Naval Undersea Weapons Center (certification in 2002)

¹ ISO 14001 is an international EMS standard that is universally recognized as encompassing all the required elements of a successful EMS. There are five key elements: (1) Policy; (2) Planning; (3) Implementation and Operation; (4) Checking and Corrective Action; and (5) Management Review.